

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

County & Agency Name: LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES Date Completed: 9/13/07

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This template is intended to be used as a guide to help counties incorporate the 2006 federal disaster response criteria as part of local child welfare plans. Minors in the probation system must also be included in the plan. County plans must be amended to include Child Welfare Services (CWS) Disaster Response Plans and be operational by September 28, 2007.

In September 2006, Congress passed the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law (PL) 109-288). PL 109-288 amended Part B of Title IV of the Social Security Act to reauthorize the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Among other changes, PL 109-288 established requirements for states on disaster planning in child welfare under Section 6 (a) (16). Accordingly, counties are requested to address the following program areas in developing local disaster readiness plans.

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CWS Disaster Response Criteria A:	Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster:
Essential Function:	1. Identification and location process of children who may be displaced
Process Description:	Lake County's average number of children in foster care in fiscal year 2006/07 was 214 and the average number of children in family maintenance was 49. Total staff number 36 and most staff are familiar with most cases. Every two weeks, an Office Assistant prints out a report with the name of every child in foster care, parent's name, foster parent/placement name, address, and phone number. In the event that computers were inaccessible or inoperable, this list is available. If the hard copy is inaccessible it can be reprinted from any CWS/CMS computer, even from another county or from Sacramento. Also, the Department maintains a list of cell phone and land

	<p>line contact numbers for local FFAs and group homes.</p> <p>All children placed by probation will be identified and located by the JUV CASE ACCESS computer system located at the Probation Department and at a separate location at Lake County Juvenile Hall. The lead placement worker will identify and locate these children, but any probation officer can access these records. If the computer system is inaccessible, the identifying and contact information can be found in the child's paper file.</p>
Essential Function:	2. Communication process with child care providers
Process Description:	Foster parents communicate directly with their child care providers. CWS has no oversight over child care providers.
Essential Function:	3. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event known in advance
Process Description:	<p>CWS building evacuation plan is outlined in a written policy and procedure document and staff participates in scheduled fire/emergency drills. The Lake County Office of Emergency Services (OES) has evacuation plans in place for the County and would coordinate an evacuation. Probation currently has no placements in the County. If a ward is placed in the County, the lead placement worker will contact the care provider and may detain the ward if needed. The lead placement worker will also contact out-of-county providers to determine if evacuation is needed. If care cannot be found for a ward outside of the disaster area, the ward can be housed at juvenile hall. Juvenile hall has established its own disaster/evacuations plans and any probation foster care wards that may be housed there will be subject to those procedures.</p>
Essential Function:	4. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event not known in advance
Process Description:	Same as above.
Essential Function:	5. Identification of shelters
Process Description:	County OES is in the process of developing a list of shelter sites for the County.
Essential Function:	6. Parental notification procedures
Process Description:	<p>Social workers are responsible to look up on line or in hard copy files contact information for the parents of children in their caseloads.</p> <p>For probation wards, the lead placement officer will contact the parent or guardian of each</p>

	placed child as soon as possible. Parental contact information is found in the computer or paper file, and is available at either the probation department or at juvenile hall. If the parent cannot be reached, the lead placement officer will advise collaborative law enforcement in the area where the parent lives. If law enforcement is not available, the local OES coordinator will be contacted.
Essential Function:	7. Alternative processes for providing continued services
Process Description:	In an emergency where staff is unable to report to work, LCDSS policies provide for a skeleton crew to provide immediate services. The skeleton crew consists of all managers, supervisors, analysts, the on-call ER social worker, one additional social worker, and one office assistant. Probation has established procedures to work with neighboring counties. Protocols are established for all placement officers and their supervisors to receive emergency overtime in order to ensure service to children in placement.
Essential Function:	8. Staff assignment process
Process Description:	Certain CWS staff (see skeleton crew in item 7 above) are on notice that they are required to report to work in an emergency situation. Tasks will be assigned as needed. Probation's lead placement officer and supervisor may reassign work as needed. The placement supervisor, who does not carry a regular case load, may take on cases if needed.
Essential Function:	9. Workload planning
Process Description:	Supervisors would be in charge of dividing up workloads among members of their units. Workers could be reassigned as needed in an emergency where not all staff is able to be present. Supervisors could also perform social worker functions as needed.
Essential Function:	10. Alternative locations for operations
Process Description:	Lake County CWS is located in a satellite office approximately 22 miles from the main DSS office. CWS could operate out of the LCDSS main building, or the Adult Services building, both located in Lower Lake. Computer access to CWS/CMS could be established at either location and telephone calls forwarded there. Additionally, Lake County CWS has contacted neighboring Mendocino County, and they are amenable to developing an MOU to provide mutual assistance/exchange if an emergency required out-of-county assistance. The Probation Department can work out of the juvenile hall building if probation offices are unavailable. Both are located in Lakeport. If both locations were unavailable, Probation would work with neighboring counties to continue caring for wards.

Essential Function:	11. Orientation and ongoing training
Process Description:	All managers and supervisors are required to attend annual disaster preparedness training presented by the County Office of Emergency Services. Additional staff members have volunteered and been trained by Red Cross to perform emergency relief work. All probation officers are emergency service workers in the event of a disaster and receive training from OES. All placement officers and their supervisor have read and signed the “Probation Emergency Plan for Children in Foster Care” document.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria B:	Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases:
Essential Function:	1. New child welfare investigation process
Process Description:	If the CWS telephones were disabled, staff would notify all local law enforcement agencies and coordinate with them to relay information to CWS to provide emergency services for children in need.
Essential Function:	2. Implementation process for providing new services
Process Description:	All social workers are trained, for purposes of being on call, to perform emergency investigations and if needed could be reassigned to that function.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria C:	Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster:
Essential Function:	1. Communication structure – staff
Process Description:	Ham radio operators have been designated and trained in each DSS office. Also, hand held, battery operated, two-way radios are located in each department of DSS to enable communication with each other and local law enforcement agencies if telephones are unavailable. Probation officers have use of cell phones and the emergency number for juvenile hall, which is listed on all placement contracts. If needed, officers can access the emergency radio system, per Department instructions, to contact dispatch and OES locally or in other counties.
Essential Function:	2. Communication structure – child welfare personnel (phone tree)
Process Description:	Lines of communication are clearly delineated within the CWS organization. The Deputy

	Director oversees two Program Managers. One PM would be responsible for calling the Office Assistant Supervisor, who calls the Office Assistants. The other PM would be responsible for calling the Analysts and the four Social Worker Supervisors, who would call the Social Workers whom they supervise. Each social worker is assigned a county cell phone and management and supervisors have contact information for all of them.
Essential Function:	3. Communication structure – contracted services
Process Description:	CWS contracts with an answering service, which has the number of the on-call social worker at all times when the office is closed. CWS also contract for emergency foster care with a FFA and maintains contact information (land line, cell phone and e-mail) for the director and assistant director of the FFA. CWS social workers also have contact information for FFA social workers.
Essential Function:	4. Communication process when all normal channels are unavailable
Process Description:	LCDSS has four battery operated, two-way radios to keep the main DSS office in contact with the satellite offices (CWS and Adult Services). Also, each of the three offices has two staff persons, who are being trained in ham radio operation, as a means of enabling communication when telephone lines are not operational.
Essential Function:	5. Communication frequency
Process Description:	Social workers contact clients regularly as required by law and would continue to do so by whatever means available in the event of a disaster or emergency.
Essential Function:	6. Communication with media
Process Description:	OES has designated a County spokesperson from the County Administration Office. The Director of DSS or her designee is authorized to speak to the media regarding DSS operations and information during or following a disaster.
Essential Function:	7. Communication with volunteers
Process Description:	Due to the confidentiality requirements of CWS, there are no volunteer workers. In a disaster situation that necessitated the use of volunteers, communication with them would be handled by the DSS Director or her designee.

Essential Function:	8. Establishment of a toll-free number prior to disaster (include TTY)
Process Description:	1-800-386-4090 TTY is made available in Lake County via the Telephone Relay Service which is located out of county, and presumably would be functional in a disaster affecting the County.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria D:	Preserve essential program records:
Essential Function:	1. Record preservation process
Process Description:	In addition to saving all computer generated work in CWS/CMS, hard copies of documents are kept in the physical file. All documents filed in court are preserved also in the court files. A case's essential documents could be reconstructed as needed.
Essential Function:	2. Use of off-site back-up system
Process Description:	The CWS/CMS computers' back-up is located in Sacramento. There are also paper files located in the CWS office. The courthouse is located several blocks from CWS and houses all the court files.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria E:	Coordinate services and share information with others:
Essential Function:	1. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children reporting process
Process Description:	One of the Social Worker Supervisors is the office ICPC coordinator and would handle all communication regarding out of state placements.
Essential Function:	2. Mental health providers
Process Description:	County Mental Health Department is located less than one mile from CWS office. The departments communicate via phone, e-mail, and in-person meetings.
Essential Function:	3. Courts
Process Description:	The courthouse is located approximately one half mile from the CWS office. Thus, even if telephone and e-mail were non-functional, in-person communication would be possible in most

	situations.
Essential Function:	4. Federal partners
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	5. CDSS
Process Description:	Lake County's CWS representative in Sacramento is Teresa Sanchez. Regular quarterly meetings have established a line of communication, both by telephone or e-mail.
Essential Function:	6. Tribes
Process Description:	Of the six local tribes, five have ICWA representatives. Through regular meetings, CWS has established relations with the ICWA reps and other tribal leaders (including the tribe that lacks an ICWA rep) and maintains contact information for all, and also with a tribal expert witness.
Essential Function:	7. Volunteers
Process Description:	There are currently no volunteers working with CWS. If an emergency situation required help from volunteers, communication with them would be handled by the DSS Director or her designee, who could delegate responsibility to staff as needed.